

Executive Summary

Overview of the Job Analysis.

The National Certification Board for Therapeutic Massage and Bodywork (NCBTMB) commissioned a job analysis for therapeutic massage and bodywork professionals.

NCBTMB contracted with The Chauncey Group International® (Chauncey Group®), a subsidiary of Educational Testing Service®, to conduct the study during 2001-2002.

Job analysis refers to procedures designed to obtain descriptive information about the tasks performed in a job and the knowledge/skills needed to adequately perform those tasks. The purpose of the job analysis was to:

- develop a list of the important tasks and knowledge/skills needed to perform therapeutic massage and bodywork;
- develop test specifications for the National Certification Examination (NCE-level examination);
- obtain useful information that can guide professional development initiatives for therapeutic massage and bodywork professionals; and,
- ensure that NCBTMB has up-to-date information about expected changes in therapeutic massage and bodywork professional work over the next few years.

Conduct of the Job Analysis.

The job analysis consisted of several activities: survey development, survey dissemination, compilation of survey results, and test specifications development. The successful outcome of the study was dependent on the excellent information provided by therapeutic massage and bodywork professionals.

Survey Development.

Survey research is an efficient and effective way to identify the tasks and knowledge that are important to the work performed by large numbers of therapeutic massage and bodywork professionals.

Job Analysis Results at a Glance

Who Participated in the Study

Over 500 therapeutic massage and bodywork professionals representing all regions of the United States participated in the study.

Task and Knowledge/Skill Ratings

- The majority of task and knowledge/skill statements included on the survey were verified as important to professional practice
- The comprehensiveness of the survey content was confirmed by the survey respondents

Training Needs

- Certification in specialty areas
- More science training
- Business courses
- More continuing education classes at reasonable costs

Expected Job Changes

- More business skills will be required by therapeutic massage and bodywork professionals
- More advanced-level training will be needed
- More interaction with professionals in the medical field will occur
- More specialized training will be needed to work with patients who have complex injuries and/or chronic pain, children, geriatric clients, and hospice patients.

The development of the survey was based on information from a number of sources:

- NCBTMB provided Chauncey Group with the previous job analysis study conducted in 1997. Chauncey Group used this information to develop a preliminary list of tasks and knowledge/skills
- Telephone interviews with therapeutic massage and bodywork professionals who reviewed and commenced work on the preliminary listing of the tasks and knowledge/skills

- A Task Force Committee comprised of therapeutic massage and bodywork professionals who reviewed and revised 1) the preliminary list of tasks and knowledge/skills and 2) the first draft of the Therapeutic Massage and Bodywork Professionals survey
- Therapeutic massage and bodywork professionals who completed the pilot version of the survey to ensure that the document was clearly written and comprehensive in content

The 67 tasks and 177 knowledge/skill statements covered the following domains:

Task Domains	Knowledge/Skill Domains
1. Intake of Information	1. General Knowledge of Body Systems
2. Assessment Procedures	2. Anatomy, Physiology, and Kinesiology
3. Client Relations and Communications	3. Pathology
4. Therapeutic Massage and Bodywork Application	4. Therapeutic Massage and Bodywork Assessment
5. Professional Standards, Ethics, Business and Legal Practices	5. Therapeutic Massage and Bodywork Application: Theory, Methods, and Techniques
	6. Professional Standards, Ethics, Business and Legal Practices

Survey Content.

The survey consisted of six sections:

1. Tasks; 2. Knowledge/Skills;
3. Recommendation for Test Content;
4. Bodywork Approaches;
5. Background and General Information;
- and, 6. Comments.

Dissemination of the Job Analysis Surveys.

Chauncey Group printed, assembled, and mailed the surveys in September 2002. A total of 2,335 therapeutic massage and bodywork professionals were invited to complete a survey.

The survey sampling plan was developed to reflect the percentage of NCEs by state. The number of NCEs in a state was divided by the total number of NCEs nationwide. The resulting percentage was used to determine the number of surveys disseminated within a given state.

Each survey packet included a cover letter provided by NCBTMB, a survey, and a postage-paid envelope for returning the completed survey to Chauncey Group. Participants were mailed a survey completion reminder after the survey was disseminated.

Results.

Survey Response Rate

Of the 2,335 surveys disseminated to therapeutic massage and bodywork professionals, 517 surveys (22.9%) were returned completed. A total of 78 surveys were returned to NCBTMB as undeliverable.

Profile of the Survey Respondents

Top Five Therapeutic Massage/Bodywork Approaches. According to the most frequently recurring responses, the top five therapeutic massage/bodywork approaches that best describe their work are: Swedish massage, deep connective tissue massage, myofascial release, neuromuscular therapy, and trigger point therapy.

Therapeutic Massage/Bodywork Approaches in Which Survey Respondents Are Credentialed. The top ten areas in which survey respondents reported holding a credential (certification, license, and/or registration) are: Swedish massage, deep connective tissue massage, myofascial release, reflexology, sports massage, neuromuscular therapy, Reiki, trigger point therapy, seated massage, and craniosacral.

Practice Setting. Slightly under one-half of the respondents reported that they work in private practice in a clinic/office (23.4%) or private practice in home (21.9%). These two categories represent the most frequently selected response categories.

Years in Profession. Most of the respondents (81.4%) reported they have worked in the therapeutic massage profession for less than nine years. The most frequent response was one to three years.

About one half of the respondents have been certified through the NCE since 2000. The other respondents reported that they have been certified through NCE since 1991.

Supervising Others/Teaching. The majority neither supervise employees (90.5%) nor teach therapeutic massage therapy/bodywork (83.1%).

Geographic Location. Most respondents indicated that they work in an urban (31.1%) or suburban (39.7%) setting. The majority of respondents reported that they work in the eastern region of the United States [Mid-Atlantic (23.8%), Southeastern (21.7%), Northeast (12.2%)], the Great Lakes (14.5%), or the Pacific (11.2%) region.

Education. A majority of the respondents reported that they hold a bachelor's degree (27.9%), an Associate's degree (12.8%), or have completed some college (22.1%).

Self-Description. By gender, more females participated in the survey (81.2%) than males (17.4%). The majority of survey respondents reported they are white (87.0%).

Importance Ratings

Means were computed for each of the 67 task and 151 knowledge/skill statements.

Participants were asked to rate the importance of each task and knowledge/skill to deliver safe and effective therapeutic massage and bodywork sessions by entry-level NCEs (less than two years of relevant experience).

Ratings were provided along a five-point continuum ranging from "of no importance" to "very important." The majority of tasks and knowledge statements achieved high importance means.

Content Coverage

Evidence was provided in this study on the comprehensiveness of the content coverage within the domains. If the tasks and knowledge within a domain are adequately defined, then it should be judged as being well covered. Respondents indicated that the content was well covered, thus supporting the adequacy of the defined domains.

The validated list of important tasks and knowledge provides a solid foundation for developing a new version of the NCE-level examination.

Professional Development Needs

In the write-in comments section of the survey, respondents indicated they want:

- Certification for specific techniques
- More science training

- Business courses
- More continuing education classes at reasonable costs

Expected Changes in the Work Performed by Therapeutic Massage and Bodywork Professionals

Respondents reported a number of expected changes in their respective jobs over the next few years, including:

- More business skills will be required by therapeutic massage and bodywork professionals
- More advanced-level training will be needed
- More interaction with professionals in the medical field will occur
- More specialized training will be needed to work with patients who have complex injuries and/or chronic pain and to work with children, geriatric clients, and hospice patients.

Test Specifications Development.

A Test Specifications Committee was convened in November 2002 to review the job analysis findings and create the test content outline for the NCE-level examination. The new specifications will be used to develop future versions of the NCE-level examination.

Summary.

In summary, this study took a multi-method approach to identify the tasks and knowledge/skills that are important to the competent performance of therapeutic massage and bodywork professionals. The job analysis process allowed for input from over 500 therapeutic massage and bodywork professionals and was conducted within the guidelines of professionally sound practice. The results of the study can be used by NCBTMB to develop a new version of the NCE-level examination and guide professional development initiatives.